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For immediate release:

“Important News for AHCCCS Members who Receive Medicare.”

Monetary help announced for Arizona’s most vulnerable population

September 21, 2006. (Phoenix, AZ)- Financial help is on the way to the nearly 100-thousand Arizonans who receive Medicare and are members of the AHCCCS Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System. Starting October 1st, people known as dual eligible’s, meaning they qualify under the Federal Poverty Guidelines for both AHCCCS as well as Medicare, will no longer have to pay co-pays for prescriptions under Medicare Part D. Governor Janet Napolitano along with the State Legislature, included funds in the new budget to cover these co-payments.

“The Medicare Part D co-pays affects many elderly and disabled people who are on Medicare as well as AHCCCS, known as dual eligible. This is our most vulnerable population,” says Governor Janet Napolitano. “I am pleased that the State Legislature and I could work together to make this possible.”

When the Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage, Medicare Part D, started January 1, 2006, the Federal Government required co-payments of \$1 to \$5 depending on the type of drug. For those who live within the Federal Poverty Level, which for a single person is an income of \$817 a month, the co-pays were causing further hardship.

The benefit starts on October 1, 2006. Arizona residents with questions on this benefit can call 1-800-770-8014. For further information please contact Rainey Daye Holloway, Chief Public Information Officer for AHCCCS at 602-417-4269.

AHCCCS is Arizona's Medicaid program, designed to deliver quality health care under cutting-edge concepts of managed care. Over the years, independent evaluations repeatedly have praised the program's effectiveness. AHCCCS has received national acclaim as a model for other Medicaid programs and the approach has been recommended to other states by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the federal agency that oversees AHCCCS. AHCCCS receives federal, state and county funds to operate, including some money from Arizona's tobacco tax.

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